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ABSTRACT

Although the conditions under which adjunct faculty work do not encourage them to form deep connections to their institutions, the quality of their instructional and counseling services depends upon their level of integration into departments. However, models for integrating adjuncts are often based on a novice-professional paradigm, a top-down approach which primarily addresses administrative concerns and ignores the fact that adjuncts are often highly experienced. To truly help adjuncts become valued members of the department, their training should follow the principle of andragogy, or the assumption that learners are self-directed and should be given problem-centered activities with immediate applications. One model that has been developed offers a series of professional development activities in 3 semesters that add to an adjunct faculty member's knowledge of basic teaching practices while building new links to the department and other counseling faculty members. The first phase of the program is a course in specific, fundamental instructional skills, while the second semester provides exposure to more advanced teaching topics. In the third phase, participants design and perform an analysis of the effectiveness of their own teaching skills. Finally, if adjuncts are to feel in control of their own destinies, they must have a voice in the governance of the student development department. Contains 18 references. (TGI)

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TOWARD A THEORY AND A MODEL FOR INTEGRATING ADJUNCTS INTO THE DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Part-time faculty operate under unfavorable conditions: no offices, lack of time on campus, usually hired on short-term contracts. Because of fragmented schedules it is difficult for them to develop deep institutional commitments, and their connections with other faculty and students are tenuous at best. The spirit of community is weakened (Agee, 1984; Friedlander, 1980; Hauff & Berdie, 1989).

Does this mean that the quality of counseling/instruction suffer? That would depend on how well the individuals are integrated into our department. An adjunct who perceives himself or herself as neglected is not likely to be a strong addition to the department. This same person, however, well-trained and appreciated, can be a source of strength. In truth, then, the issue that counts is not whether an counselor/instructor is full-time or part time. It is how the counselor/instructor is used and treated (Conrad & Hammond, 1982; Flynn et al., 1986).

It must be recognized that the use of part-time faculty is not going to stop. For many reasons, some educationally sound and some based solely on budgets, the practice will continue and probably increase. Since that is the case, the questions becomes whether a potential problem can be turned into an opportunity (Behrent & Parsons, 1983; Bramlett & Rodriguez, 1982; Colwell, 1984).

Colleges have been devising models for integrating adjuncts into their community (Maguire, 1984; MacLean, 1986; Pedras, 1985). Most of these models are based on a novice-professional model, which ignores the fact that many part-timers are very experienced. Instead of taking aim at the problems of adjuncts, these models aim at what the institution thinks the problems are. It is a top-down model. These top-down models follow a plan based on the following reasons:

- Administrators wanted to communicate clearly to adjuncts what was expected of them.
- Adjuncts were the primary contacts some students had with the college.
- Students have the right to expect quality instruction from adjuncts.

It is easy to see that these top-down reasons, connoting an air of distrust, as though professionals who happen to work fewer hours under different circumstances are somehow not able to do the job. The models of integration seldom mention the needs of adjuncts (Gappa, 1984; Rabalais, & Perrit, 1983).

Bramlett and Rodriguez (1982) recognize the needs of adjuncts, stating that part-timers do not understand or relate to the mission of the community college, might be unfamiliar with the support services, and, in fact, might not understand what is expected of them.

These factors result in a class of professionals who feel they are not an important part of the fabric of the department and that of the college. Authors conclude that if these concerns are not addressed, they might well lead to long-term damage to the quality of instruction (Leslie et al., 1982; Tuckman, 1981; Wallace, 1984).

Thus far, however, most of the programs described in the literature to correct this problem are designed more to fit the needs of the colleges than those of the adjunct faculty. Serving the needs of the institution is important and cannot be ignored, but is the college actually served by top-down programs that in all probability will not recognize and develop the skills and talents of the people it hires to represent it?

To be effective, an integration model must proceed from a coherent theory, which provides a framework for interpretation, a means to construct a model that will account for most of the factors deemed important for success.

A THEORY OF INTEGRATION

The theory is a way of thinking about a problem, while the model is a way of proceeding once the thought is done. If adjuncts are to be e integrated into the department so that they can make the contributions to the college they are capable of, their goals, motives and needs must be considered. Not only do adjuncts have goals, motives and needs, they also have feelings. When people become frustrated or insecure, as many adjuncts are, their emotional arousal can work against the desired changes. These same people, however, come to the problem with sets of ideas, skills and talents that often go beyond what is expected. A good integration model will tap these abilities (Fox, 1984; Hauff, 1989).

Tapping these abilities is important because change comes from within The desired goal, a better integration of adjuncts, can be met only if the people involved, the adjuncts themselves, function as an essential part of the change.

From these observations, certain conclusions emerge. One-shot programs, such as two-hour workshops, will not work because change requires a sustained effort. The workshop approach, as described in the literature, is generally a master-apprentice situation, which loses the input of the members of the group and does not recognize the skills, talents and ideas of the adjuncts. Most programs are also generated by the college and focus on the college's perceptions of its goals and needs; the goals, aims, intentions and needs of the people taking the training are not considered to be major factors. These programs will not achieve the desired results MacLean, 1986; Pedras, 1985; Rabalais & Peritt, 1983).

To be effective, a theory must also consider what is known about learning. Though they are institutions that teach a largely adult population, most community colleges do not show much awareness of the fact that adults learn differently from children. This fact is true of students and faculty alike. If adjuncts are to become valued members of the department, their training should follow the known principles of adult learning.

The concept of andragogy, developed by Malcolm Knowles (1970) best explores adult learning habits. Andragogy assumes that students are self-directed and their learning therefore must have immediacy of application and must be problem centered. It differs from the more traditional pedagogy by establishing a climate of mutuality, respect and informality; it sees learning as a collaborative effort. Under this form, the student is a partner in learning, rather than simply a passive recipient. Since faculty members, both full-time and part-time, constitute a community of learners, they should train each other by andragogical models.

From this discussion the basic assumptions of theory emerge, which are as follows:

- Adjuncts are adult professionals. It can be assumed they are qualified; after all, they were deemed worthy of hiring. For this reason, a top-down, parent-child communication is not only inadequate but borders on insult.
- The training they receive must be ongoing and sustained, both formal and informal. Although they are qualified professionals, they may not know the procedures of the department; these must be available to them. A one-shot session will not be effective because teaching of any course presents unique problems which must be discussed and resolved as they arise over the semester.
- Adjunct faculty have a stake in their own development. Seeking to further their own personal and professional growth, they recognize that continued increases in professionalism will benefit them. Development, then, does not need to be forced; it needs only to be available.
- Adjuncts can initiate and lead much of their own integration. Most integration models assume the recipient to be a passive receptacle for the knowledge of others. This simply is not the case. Since they are the ones on the line, part-timers are the ones in the best position to initiate change.
- The goals of the adjuncts are the same as those of the college. It need not be assumed that their use will create a decrease in the quality of instruction. This will happen only if the part-timers are not made a true part of the counseling/teaching team.

With this theoretical base in mind, I will now describe a model that can integrate part-timers into a fully functioning department of student development.

MODEL OF INTEGRATION

To begin, we must recognize that professionals must be equipped to do the job expected of them. No institution would ask full-timers to work without an office, a telephone, access to word processors, xerox machines and other support services; however, adjuncts are routinely asked to do this. This denies them the professionalism the college requires of them.

Other support services should be extended to them and a handbook describing the services should be issued. Training should go beyond the handbook. It should be ongoing throughout the year.

The model that addresses these concerns is a series of teaching-related activities that add to an adjunct faculty member's knowledge of basic teaching practices while building new links to the department and other counseling faculty members. The model outlines a program of professional development activities over three successive semesters.

The model has three phases, all of which are directly related to teaching improvement. The first phase of the professional development program focuses on a specific set of instructional skills which are the bases for planning and executing any successful lesson. The program creates opportunities for adjunct faculty members to practice and develop these specific skills. The second phase introduces participants to broader teaching topics which go beyond the planning of an individual lesson. These topics affect the planning of an entire course or suggest the introduction of an entirely new approach or teaching practice throughout a course. The third phase is an analysis of teaching as it is actually practiced. Each participant designs and executes an analysis of the effectiveness of some aspect of their own teaching.

Instructional Skills - Phase I (Semester I)

The first phase is the completion of an Instructional Skills Phase (ISP). The ISP for semester I emphasizes very specific, fundamental teaching skills including the basics of an effective lesson, planning and preparing for a lesson, and basic classroom management skills. The applications of these skills are observed in a series of supervisory visits and one evaluation session at the end of the semester.

In the first semester the adjuncts must also have a weekly one-hour set aside for an "orientation" session regarding administrative, counseling, and other support services procedures.

Advanced Teaching - Phase II (Semester II)

The second phase of the program is an Advanced Teaching Phase (ATP). The ATP is designed to provide exposure to teaching topics beyond the basics introduced in Phase I. The content of the training will center on questioning techniques, use of teaching aids and advanced classroom management practices. The applications of these skills are observed in a series of supervisory visits and one evaluation session at the end of the semester.

Teaching Analysis - Phase III (Semester III)

The final phase in the program is Teaching Analysis (TAP). In this final phase, participants will learn how to observe and evaluate their teaching skills and techniques, employing Type A/B models of evaluation. Phase III should lead to Peer Mentoring partnerships in which adjuncts continue to grow professionally as they continue to counsel and teach in the department.

SHARING IN GOVERNANCE

If they are to feel in control of their own destinies, adjuncts must have a voice in the governance of the department of Student Development. In addition to be being invited to attend department meetings, they should be encouraged to serve on committees, vote on policy , and help set the future of the department (Agee, 1984; Conrad & Hammond, 1982).

A common objection to this notion of shared governance is that since part-timers are hired and paid by the course, they will not want to devote their time and energies to activities they receive no compensation for. The literature, however, suggests that many will opt for participation (Wallace, 1984).

Another objection is that departmental participation belongs to those who have a future in the department. Since the likelihood of adjuncts moving to full faculty status is remote, giving them a voice in leadership is a cruel hoax.

Is it a hoax to give someone a say in his or her own destiny? Typically, they teach courses that full-time faculty wishes to avoid. They teach in less desirable times and in less desirable locations. Giving them the dignity of having a say in how the department that employs them operates seems to be small compensation.

Although small, it is an important compensation. Tuckman (1981) reports that part-timers are not encouraged to develop their skills, earn further degrees or to publish. They rarely receive merit raises or promotions. Their biggest sources of unhappiness are their invisibility,

their lack of respect from full-time colleagues and the failure of their colleges to reward them. Serving the department would remove two of those sources of dissatisfaction. If the college cannot move them into full-time jobs, it can at least offer them a chance to develop their resumes so that they might become better candidates at other institutions.

With these notes in mind toward a model based on theory, it becomes evident that integrating adjuncts into the department of Student Development requires a systematic ongoing effort that is based on adult-to-adult communication. It might be difficult to do, but the results are worth it. Leslie (1982) reports that far from lowering standards, part-timers enrich them if they are carefully chosen and supported. According to Leslie, part-timers are especially effective at teaching nontraditional students, the type who dominate most community colleges.

To lose such a resource because we do not know how to properly utilize it would be a mistake that our department cannot afford to make.

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SUMMARY

Integrating adjuncts into the department of student development requires a systematic ongoing effort that is based on a theory and a model. The theory is a way of thinking about a problem, while the model is a way of proceeding once the thought is articulated.

Andragogy, a theory of learning, assumes that adjuncts are self-directed and their learning therefore must have immediacy of application and must be problem centered. It differs from traditional pedagogy by establishing a climate of mutuality, respect and informality; it sees learning as a collaborative effort. Under this form, the adjunct is a partner in learning, rather than simply a passive recipient.

The model requires adjuncts to complete professional development activities in three successive semesters. The model has three phases, all of which are directly related to teaching improvement. The first phase focuses on a specific set of instructional skills which are the bases for planning and executing any successful lesson. The second phase introduces adjuncts to broader teaching topics that include questioning and classroom management. The third phase is an analysis of teaching and the use of self-observation for developing the effectivness of some aspect of the adjuncts' own teaching.